(c) and (d) The steps taken by the Government include facilitating the import of machinery, equipment and raw material, building up of infrastructural facilities, imparting design and development training for technicians under various international assistance and cooperation projects. A four-ycar UNDP assisted Leather Sector Programme has also come into operation with effect from 1-4-1992. The objectives of this programme include man-power development strengthening R&D Capacity to facilitate product and technology development etc. The Government has also set up a Footwear Design and Development Institute at Noida whose objectives include manpower development and imparting training at various levels.

Target for boosting rubber exports

665. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) wheter it is a fact that Government have fixed any specific targets for boosting rubber exports ;

(b) if so, whether rubber board has been involved in this deal ;

(c) what are the details of the specific targets fixed ;

(d) what are the details of the production and exports of natural rubber made during the last three years ;

(e) whether it is a fact that natural rubber is facing a tough competition from the synthetic rubber ; and

(f) if so, what efforts have been made, so far, to popularise the use of natural rubber ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (c) Till recently, there was no regular export of natural rubber. On 17th January, 1992 Government allowed export of 14,000 MTs of natural rubber consisting 3000 MTs of centrifuged latex (dry rubber content), 5000 MTs of ISNR—20 grades of crumb uibber and 6000 MTs of off-grade rubber (other than RMA-4 and RMA-5 grades) by private exporters, keeping in view the surplus availability and to arrest the decline in prices at that time. The Rubber Board was made the agency to monitor the ceiling in respect of the export of this 14,000 MTs of natural rubber.

(d) The details of the production and exports of natural rubber made during the last three years are as under :—

Year	Production (Tonnes)	Export (Tonnes)
1989-90	2,97,300	Nil
1990-91	3,29,615	Nil
1991-92 (Estimated)	3,65,000	5834

(e) and (f) At present in, India general purpose synthetic rubbers are almost twice as costly as natural rubber and therefore, the question of facing tough competition does not arise.

Export of Marine Products

666. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) what are the details of the quantity and value of exports of marine products during the last 3 years, year-wise ; and

(b) what steps are proposed to be taken by Government to increase the quantum of exports of marine products during the Eighth Five Year Plan period ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED) : (a) The export of marine products during the last 3 years were :

(in Mts.) (Rs. crores)

Year	Qty.	Value
1989-90	110843	635
1990-91	139419	893
1991-92 Provisional	172800	1375

Source : — MPEDA Cochin)